

# Working through a Crisis – Denver Bomb Cyclone March 2019

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Transit Board Administrators Seminar



# Crisis Management

- Crisis Impact and Scope
- Communications Plan
- Crisis Remediation
- Lessons Learned



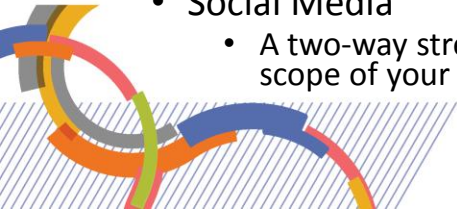
# Storm Impact

- Most intense cyclone and lowest atmospheric pressure in Colorado recorded history - Denver Metro declared State of Emergency
  - Category 1 hurricane winds recorded at 96 MPH with sustained winds of 70 – 80 Miles per hour
  - Swirling precipitation turning to ice and snow resulted in Blizzard conditions and zero visibility for the entire metro area
  - The inability of municipalities to keep pace with the storm resulted in:
    - Build up of ice causing power outages including RTD SCAADA and signal systems
    - Road Closures with over 1500 vehicles stranded on major roadways including RTD vehicles with the metropolitan area virtually impassable
    - Icy catenary wires and low visibility place Light rail and Commuter Rail on infrequent scheduling and CDOT requests 50 RTD buses to engage in rescue efforts on our Roadways



# Communication

- Internal
  - Situational Reports hourly via Phone, Text, E-mail, ReadyOps (SMS communication system).
  - The GM, Board Administrator, Chair of the Board communicate regularly to the Board to insure full disclosure of the situation and availability of a quorum should the decision making by the Board be needed
  - Communications regarding work expectations to all support staff, remote work options and safety practices for all workers supporting transportation efforts
- External
  - We use twitter to provide updates on service including incidents, disruptions and delays. Social media tends to be a direct conversation with customers.
  - Facebook and Instagram promotes events and activities; notifies people of public meetings
  - Communications with State, City and Government agencies via .Gov and emergency management systems state wide
  - All Directors are scheduled for Media training once they are elected. Current information, talking points and fact sheets are provided for up to date and relevant information
- Social Media
  - A two-way street, extremely effective in getting and sharing information particularly in a crisis with a large scope of your constituency



# Crisis Remediation

- Emergency Command Center was established
  - General Manager, CSO, COO assume role as Incident Commanders determined by the scope of the incident
  - Senior Leadership, Emergency response safety and security teams were placed at each division and in the field
  - Emergency Generators deployed RTD District wide for support teams to continue working to serve the public and the teams working the field
  - Severe weather plan was followed with great success by all areas of the agency
- Service Planning
  - Determined hardest hit areas and cancelled/dropped routes as needed



# Lessons Learned

- Training for employees on all the communication processes available to insure all active roles needed are in place
- The need for wider spread mass communications to employees through the crisis event
- The first responder drills have taken place with all our new rail opening with great success. Internal drills need to be more frequent with varied scenarios
- Be better prepared for the volume of transportation needs in evacuation situations
- Routine disaster recovery exercises surrounding support operations –
  - Generators
  - Strategic placement of heavy equipment district wide



# Questions?

